

06/03/17 : CIA-RDP82-00550A00150045000
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

--	--

CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT Society of Friends of
 Republican Spain

NO. OF PAGES 2

25X1A

NO. OF ENCLS. **Attachment** 25X11
(LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE ACT 50 U. S. C. 31 AND 32. AS ASSEMBLED, ITS TRANSMISSION OR THE REVELATION OF ITS CONTENTS IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW. REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED, INCLUDING REPRODUCTION CONTAINED IN COPY OF THE FORM MAY BE UTILIZED AS BEING NECESSARY BY THE RECEIVING AGENCY.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION FOR THE RESEARCH
USE OF TRAINED INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS
REFERENCE CENTER LIBRARY

SOURCE

25X1X

1. The Society of Friends of Republican Spain (Vybor Spolecnosti Pratel Demokratickeho Spanolska) has its headquarters at No. 5 Sobotecka Street, Prague 12, and has local groups in all the principal cities of Czechoslovakia. It was founded during the Spanish Civil War with the purpose of helping Spanish emigres and anti-France fighters so as to aid in setting up a democratic regime in the Peninsula. The Society's motto was: "He who defends Madrid defends Prague." The Minister of the Interior at that time was uncooperative, but President Benes told V. Voska, president of the Society, that the Society could count on tacit aid from him.
2. The Society enrolled 3,000 Czechoslovaks who went to fight in Spain as volunteers. In addition it set up a hospital near Madrid, at Benecasino, with ten buildings and Czechoslovak doctors and personnel. It set up an orphan camp in a chateau in southern France for younger child refugees and a camp in Belgium for older children. In various ways it extended aid to the Czechoslovak volunteers mentioned above.

3. During the German Protectorate the heads of the Society were imprisoned by the Germans, and many of the volunteers in the international brigades died in concentration camps, in the resistance struggle, and during the liberation, so that there are now only 300 survivors out of the original 3,000.

The Society was re-formed after the liberation under the presidency of V. Voska, its old president, a captain in the army and a member of the Social Democrat Party, who had won prestige for his honest administration of the post in pre-war days.

On 16 November the Society held a general assembly, at which it elected its board of directors, the list of whom is appended at the end of this report. The business of the general assembly consisted of listening to the talks made by every one of the delegates and approving the proposals of the president. During the assembly six important members withdrew to a separate room and chose the members of the new directorate.

6. The Society sent telegrams to the United Nations and other international organizations and got other Czechoslovak organizations to do the same. On 16 July 1946 it got Zapotocky, president of the Revolutionary Trade

CONFIDENTIAL

CLASSIFICATION

CONCLUSIONS

[illegible]

This document is hereby regraded to
CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the
letter of 15 October 1978 from the
Director of Central Intelligence to the
Overseas Operations Group, dated 17 October 1978.
Next Review Date: 2008

Approved For Release 2008/08/17 : CIA-RDP82-00457R001500450001-7

Next Review Date: 2008

~~SECRET~~

510088
Extracted by F.L.R.

~~SECRET~~

25X1A

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

- 2 -

CONFIDENTIAL

Unions and a deputy of the Communist Party, to address an appeal for money for the Society to state enterprises. 1,181 enterprises responded to the call, which brought good financial results. Collections at Pilsen were especially good. The Society also put out about 500,000 stamps, which it sent to doctors, consultants, and enterprise committees. The latter sold almost all their stamps, but the response from the doctors was disappointing.

7. The Society has been helping the United Socialist Youth of Spain and Spanish Communist students who attended the World Youth Festival in Prague in the summer of 1947, as well as the Banque group in London. It also sent 10,000 Kcs. to the Union of Spanish Anti-Fascist Women.
8. It has never been revealed exactly how much money the Society collected, but it is estimated that the amount is about 4,000,000 Kcs. So far, only 304,022 Kcs. has been given to fighting Spain, according to announcements of the Society, which failed to make it clear whether this amount was composed entirely of such donations as those mentioned above or not. The rest of the money has been held up by disagreement within the Society, the Communists contended that the money should be turned over to them for forwarding to the guerrillas, but the Social Democrat members wanted the funds sent directly by the Society to the guerrillas. During the last assembly it was agreed that the funds would be sent directly.
9. The most active member of the Society is Libuše Prokopova, a woman of 32 and a member of the Communist Party, who at times performs the duties of secretary general. She speaks Spanish very well, having edited a grammar of Castilian. She is described as a woman of easy morals and great ambition who has found in Communism, and especially in the Society, a means of making a good living.
10. The Society is divided into various sections, but the Communists make up a majority. In practice it is usually what they want done that is done. The Society has several vice-presidents, one for each Czech party, but the public considers it entirely Communist.
11. By February 1948 the collections were becoming smaller as enthusiasm for Spain diminished, according to Madame Prokopova.
12. One of the members of the board of directors of the Society is Victor Velasco, head of the Spanish Radio Section of the Ministry of Information.

~~SECRET~~**CONFIDENTIAL**~~SECRET~~